

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CIVIL SERVICE AND AGENCY REORGANIZATION
CONGRESSWOMAN JO ANN DAVIS, CHAIRWOMAN



MEDIA ADVISORY

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CONTACT: Robert White, 202-226-3498
Robert.White@mail.house.gov

***Jo Ann Davis Introduces Legislation to
Prevent Redundancy in Government Programs***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Seeking a way to save tax dollars and reduce the federal government’s duplication of services, Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis (R-Va.) this week introduced H.R. 2743, the “Government Accountability and Streamlining Act of 2003.”

Congresswoman Davis’s legislation requires the Comptroller General of the United States to determine whether any proposed legislation in the House or Senate creates any new “federal entities, programs or functions” that are redundant of any existing federal program. The Comptroller General would prepare these anti-redundancy statements for bills approved by any committee or subcommittee of the House or Senate. This is similar to how the Congressional Budget Office “scores” a bill to determine its budgetary impact prior to consideration on the House or Senate floor.

“Before Congress votes on any measure, we have a full understanding of the fiscal impacts of the proposal,” Congresswoman Davis said. “Why shouldn’t we have the same information regarding whether or not a bill would be duplicating existing programs? This just seems like common sense to me.”

Congresswoman Davis, the Chairwoman of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Civil Service and Agency Organization, views the elimination of redundant federal functions as an obvious way to save money and make government work better for its citizens. She notes that the National Commission on the Public Service (known as the Volcker Commission) this year, in its report, “Urgent Business for America: Revitalizing the Federal Government for the 21st Century,” cited duplication of services as one of the major problems facing the executive branch.

Here are just a few examples from the Volcker Commission report:

- As many as 12 different agencies are responsible for administering more than 35 food safety laws;
- A total of 541 clean air, water, and waste programs are managed among 29 agencies;
- Seven different federal agencies administer 40 different programs aimed primarily at job training;
- Eight different federal agencies operate 50 different programs to aid the homeless;
- Nine agencies operate 27 teen pregnancy programs; and
- Ninety early childhood programs are scattered among 11 federal agencies.

“Too often in Washington, the answer to any problem is to create another federal program,” Congresswoman Davis said. “So we end up with similar programs being scattered among agencies and across different Cabinet departments. That’s not the most effective or efficient way to operate a government. We can do better.”

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